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**National Park Week begins with new podcasts for Hyde Park Trails and Free Admission To Historic Sites.**

(Hyde Park, NY)

The National Park Service encourages walking and hiking for fitness during National Park Week, April 17-25. A ranger-guided walk at the Franklin D. Roosevelt National Historic Site in Hyde Park will introduce a new series of downloadable podcasts for Hyde Park Trails, and also provide maps and guides to help you enjoy all of Hyde Park's Trails. The 3.5-mile walk will begin at 1:00 p.m. Saturday, April 17<sup>th</sup> at the Roosevelt Farm Lane trailhead on Rte 9 in Hyde Park, across from the entrance to the FDR site.

The guided hike will begin with a brief demonstration of a new series of downloadable podcasts that will be posted on the website of the Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt. Karl Beard of the National Park Service Rivers & Trails Program explained, "This hike is purely introductory, and no electronics are needed. But afterward, the podcasts will be a sort of ranger in your pocket. You can download them to your computer at home, and then take them out on the trails using an iPod or mp3 player. Markers along the trails tell you where to stop and listen to sounds and stories that are special to Hyde Park's trails."

The podcasts will be available for free download at [www.nps.gov/hofr](http://www.nps.gov/hofr). Programs interpret six Hyde Park trails, including the Roosevelt Farm Lane, Eleanor Roosevelt's Val-Kill, Top Cottage, a loop from the Town of Hyde Park's Riverfront Park through the grounds of the Vanderbilt Mansion, Hackett Hill Town Park, and the Winnakee Nature Preserve.

Sarah Olson, Superintendent of the Roosevelt-Vanderbilt National Historic Sites said, "Hyde Park has so many wonderful trails, and so many stories to tell about them. Walking for health is important for our families and fitness is fast becoming a national issue. We are thrilled to work with the Town of Hyde Park, Winnakee Land Trust, and many local experts and volunteers to make the podcasts available to town residents and visitors alike. We hope they will make Hyde Park's trails even more enjoyable." National Park Service trail counts found that the Hyde Park trails received more than 44,000 visits last year.

Saturday's hike also begins the fifth year of the Hyde Park Healthy Trails Walkabout. "Walkabout is a program that encourages people to do more walking on trails all year round," said Kathleen Davis, of the Town of Hyde Park Recreation Department. "If you walk at least five of our trails during the year, you will earn a free 'Walkabout 2010' sew-on patch." About 250 people earned patches last year.

The 2010 trail patch commemorates the tenth anniversary of the excavation of the Hyde Park Mastodon. The nearly-complete, 11,500-year-old skeleton was discovered in a suburban Hyde Park backyard and excavated during the summer of 2000 by Cornell paleontologists along with volunteers from Vassar College, Dartmouth College, Mount Holyoke University, SUNY New Paltz and the Boston Museum of Science.

National Park Week gives visitors the opportunity to see three national historic sites free of charge. Two wonderful things to enjoy at no cost – the historic homes in Hyde Park and the great outdoor spaces that surround them. The Home of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Vanderbilt Mansion offer tours daily from 9:00 AM until 5:00 PM. The Eleanor Roosevelt National Historic Site Val-Kill is open Thursday through Monday with tours available at 1:00 PM and 3:00 PM.

For more information about the Hyde Park Trails, the Walkabout patch, or becoming a trail volunteer, call the Hyde Park Recreation Commission offices at 229-8086. Or visit the Hyde Park Trails website at: [www.hydeparkny.us/recreation/trails](http://www.hydeparkny.us/recreation/trails). For information about the national historic sites in Hyde Park visit [www.historichydepark.org](http://www.historichydepark.org).

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